

National Certificate of Educational Achievement

2012 Assessment Report

Classical Studies Level 3

- 90511 Explain a passage or passages from a work of classical literature in translation**
- 90512 Explain a work or works of classical art**
- 90513 Examine in essay format an aspect of the classical world**

COMMENTARY

This was the final year for examinations to assess these achievement standards.

Successful candidates answered all parts of questions and followed instructions carefully. Very few appeared to be confused about the number of questions to answer for each of the three external standards, although a number continued to answer 90511 and 90512 in essay format. The only standard that requires a response in essay format is 90513, *Explain in essay format an aspect of the classical world*. However, all standards require a logical response to the question set and at higher levels a methodical approach; therefore it is recommended that candidates take time to plan in the spaces provided. Similarly, in all standards candidates should focus on ensuring that their answers are analytical in their approach, rather than an accumulation of facts

STANDARD REPORTS

90511 Explain a passage or passages from a work of classical literature in translation

ACHIEVEMENT

Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:

- showed general familiarity with the literary text as a whole
- identified and examined literary features
- answered both bullet points in the question, though often only one was developed
- were able to place the extract in its historical and / or literary context
- used specific evidence from the literary text to support points made
- demonstrated some minor errors of understanding
- expanded and explained some of their points
- wrote less than three sides.

NOT ACHIEVED

Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:

- showed little knowledge of the literary text and were unfamiliar with the extracts provided
- misunderstood or misinterpreted the question, e.g. Topic B, Question 1, referring to incidents where Aeneas shows positive personal attributes from Books 2, 4 and 6 instead of Book 1.
- wrote a response which had little relevance to the question
- wrote an uneven and/or unbalanced response
- did not use supporting evidence from the literary text
- did not accurately identify or examine literary features of the text e.g. there was confusion between humorous techniques terminology in Aristophanes, e.g. scatological is not the same as bawdy/sexual humour, vague statements being made about *furor* and *pietas* in Virgil with limited understanding of these concepts.

- made errors regarding plot, themes, characterisation, literary features, e.g. stating that Cleonymus and Cleon were the same person, Aeneas' mission was not to found Rome, but the Roman people, the storm in *Aeneid* Book 1 occurred seven years after Aeneas had left Troy, not immediately afterwards
- wrote in insufficient detail.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:

- provided analysis of the literary text, supported by appropriate examples
- addressed all bullet points in the question, although often not in equal depth
- drew appropriate conclusions and/or evaluations based on their evidence
- often provided several examples of specific evidence from the literary text to address each part of the question
- showed familiarity with the extracts and the literary text as a whole
- wrote more than two sides.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:

- demonstrated an in-depth knowledge of the extracts and the literary text as whole
- analysed literary features of the text with confidence
- used a wide range of supporting evidence from the extracts and elsewhere in the literary text to address all parts of the question and help build an argument
- showed wider understanding of the social and historical context of the literary text
- demonstrated an awareness of the complexities within the literary text, e.g. Virgil's portrayal of the Trojans as both brave and gullible, naivety of the divine plan, sneaky nature of the Greeks
- used and explained Greek or Latin terminology correctly, e.g. *pietas* in Virgil
- wrote in a fluent and focused manner
- used accurate in spelling and punctuation
- used the lines provided as guidance for how much to write, responses were detailed and the candidates often used the additional pages in the booklet.

OTHER COMMENTS

The standard does not require that candidates answer in essay format, with crafted introductions and conclusions. Responses should address the specific detail of the aspects bulleted for discussion. Both should be fully covered, and responses should focus on analysis of the literary work, rather recall of plot.

90512 Explain a work or works of classical art

ACHIEVEMENT

Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:

- demonstrated some knowledge of the art works

- showed some understanding of relevant concepts and/or terminology, e.g. Topic A, Question 2, 'composition'
- addressed both bulleted parts of the question, although their answers lacked depth and an analytical focus
- supported their points with some examples, although evidence was often generalised.

NOT ACHIEVED

Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:

- demonstrated lack of knowledge of their chosen art works and made major errors in their answers
- wrote correctly about one art work only
- misinterpreted the question set, providing considerable irrelevant material
- did not focus on the specific demands of the question, writing everything they knew about their chosen art works
- did not include supporting evidence or provided generalised examples
- did not address all parts of the question
- showed evidence of having misunderstood concepts and/or terminology, e.g. Topic A, Question 1, some candidates did not understand the meaning of 'composition' or Topic B, Question 3 'Graeco-Roman'.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:

- demonstrated specific knowledge and understanding of their chosen art works
- addressed both bullet points in some depth
- provided a range of specific, relevant and well-explained examples which clearly illustrated the point that was being made
- showed a clear understanding of concepts and terminology, e.g. Topic B, Question 2, candidates were able to differentiate between space and depth
- demonstrated an ability to analyse the art works in the context of the question set.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:

- demonstrated in-depth knowledge and understanding of their chosen artworks
- 'unpacked' the question and therefore addressed each bullet point systematically
- responded in-depth to every part of the question
- used relevant and well-developed examples to illustrate the point they were making
- showed excellent understanding of concepts and terminology relevant to the question set
- analysed convincingly and wrote succinctly.

OTHER COMMENTS

Many candidates did not approach the paper systematically; they answered both bullet points simultaneously or began with the second bullet point or wrote on only one bullet point. Following the structure of the question (i.e. answering each bullet point fully and in turn) is more likely to produce higher grades than any other approach. A large number also responded in essay format, instead of answering the two bullet points of each question. As a result, they wasted a lot of time introducing the work of art and writing a conclusion.

90513 Examine in essay format an aspect of the classical world

ACHIEVEMENT

Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:

- described key ideas and events
- provided some evidence relevant to the question
- omitted one section of the question, usually the last part
- included some irrelevant or unnecessary material
- included some inaccurate information
- wrote in essay format with an introduction, body and conclusion.

NOT ACHIEVED

Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:

- omitted more than one part of the question
- failed to address the question directly, e.g. Topic A, Question 1, described a battle but not Alexander's courage in it
- diverted to material which they did know about, e.g. Topic E, Question 1, wrote about prayer instead of sacrifice
- made general assertions with no supporting detail
- wrote short answers which showed insufficient knowledge.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:

- attempted all parts of the question, but not always in a balanced way
- explained and analysed at least some of their material
- linked their response to the final overarching question
- included relevant, and often detailed supporting evidence
- integrated some primary and/or secondary source material as evidence
- wrote fluently and at times convincingly.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:

- addressed all parts of the question in a balanced way

- analysed and discussed material in a sustained manner
- presented an overarching viewpoint and related all parts of the question to it
- gave detailed supporting evidence throughout, showing knowledge of primary and secondary source material
- wrote fluently and often in a sophisticated manner.

OTHER COMMENTS

Candidates who read the requirements of the question carefully, who planned their response before starting, and who observed essay writing conventions were able to communicate their ideas more convincingly.